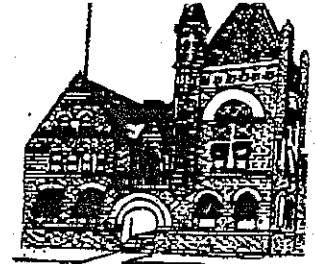




OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

City of West Haven
355 Main Street
West Haven, Ct 06516



City Hall
1896 - 1968

John M. Picard
Mayor

Council Members

James P. O'Brien
Chairman

Nicholas Pascale
First District

Deborah Conlon
Second District

Gail G. Carroll
Third District

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Fourth District

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Fifth District

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Sixth District

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Eighth District

Sean P. Ronan
Ninth District

Gail S. Burns
Tenth District

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Councilman-at-Large

Stephen W. DeCrescenzo
Councilman-at-Large

Edward O'Brien
Councilman-at-Large

Sharon Spaziani
Clerk of the Council

February 5, 2009

Senator Gary LeBeau
Commerce Committee
Room 110, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106

SENT BY FAX: 860-240-0209

Dear Senator LeBeau:

I regret that I will not be able to attend today's hearing to testify in favor of House Bill 5918. I would appreciate it if you would read my testimony into the record.

As a resident of the City of West Haven, a local merchant as well as a member of the Downtown Business Association and currently serving on the West Haven City Council, it is my pleasure to speak in favor of this Bill.

It is well documented that the driving force of a Downtown Revitalization is the Arts, which is something that has been very much missed in the Center of our city. However in recent years, there has been a ground swell of support in bringing our Center back to the thriving shopping district it once was. We will be starting a large streetscaping project in our Downtown and construction on our Railroad Station will begin within the year.

During this time, we had the opportunity to purchase, with much help from the State, a building large enough to house a cultural Arts Center in the middle of our Downtown. Since the purchase of this building, much work has been done organizing and fundraising to make this project come to fruition. While this work is ongoing, restoration of building must commence soon if we are going to truly revitalize our downtown. This building is a grand structure that is perfect for a cultural Arts Center and all you have to do is look at it and you can envision large crowds gathering to see a show, people arriving to take a dance class, or families on a weekend morning proudly enjoying their children's recitals. Of course, studies show that while these people are in our center they will shop in our stores and restaurants.

Telephone (203) 937-3672

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On behalf of my fellow merchants and every resident of West Haven I respectfully request the Committee's approval of House Bill 5918.

Please feel free to contact me if you need further information regarding this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed O'Brien".

Ed O'Brien
Councilman-at-Large

EOB/dn